



Embrace the World

*A journal of Congregational justice issues prepared by:
The Good Shepherd International Justice Peace Office*

February 2011 # 29

It is a joy for the Good Shepherd International Justice Peace Team to re-introduce to you the journal "Embrace the World". It has been some time since the last edition due to changes in personnel. "Embrace the World" is a space to share events and news about our Congregational commitment to and expressions of Good Shepherd mission of Justice and Peace, according to the direction of the Congregational Chapter 2009.

We hope it will be of interest to you and to all Good Shepherd people, as we deepen our understanding of Justice and share the new expressions of NGO activities of the Congregation. The journal will be sent 3 times yearly through the JP Contact Persons; please distribute this journal through all communities, associates, friends, staff and partners of Good Shepherd. We welcome your views and contribution. Send to Yolanda Sanchez at volasanco@gmail.com. May it be a help in "weaving together" the loving zeal of our Good Shepherd.

launched under the leadership of Ms. **Michelle Bachelet** former President of Chile.

This is a historic moment, a new era in promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women. It is the moment to become aware and engage with UN women. Make the new website for UN Women your home page: <http://www.unwomen.org>. This way you will be up to date on all developments.

UN Women is grounded in the vision of equality enshrined in the UN Charter and built on two landmark agreements the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) 1979 and The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995).

The Millennium Declaration and Millennium Development Goals are also central to gender equality and poverty eradication. UN Women promises to be a dynamic and strong champion for women and girls, providing them with a powerful voice at the global, regional and local levels. We as Good Shepherd people are present at all these levels with our Justice Peace Contacts and unit level ministries, NGO Regional Designates and Representatives to the UN in New York, Geneva and Vienna. UN Women will be visible at national level. UN Women pledges to forge effective partnerships with civil society – with you and I.

We have a new opportunity to re-engage in the struggle for gender equality and the empowerment of women. Our 2009 Chapter Direction Statement called us to focus "on women and girls who are trafficked, forced to migrate and oppressed by abject poverty."



During the first Commission on the Status of Women that I attended in March of 2008 there was a very strong campaign lead by a coalition of NGO's called GEAR. The catch phrase was 'GEAR UP.' This was a call to the United Nations for a new structure to promote Gender Equality. On January 1st, 2011 **UN Women - United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women** was



Further we commit ourselves to “respond to the anguish of the world... by taking courageous steps to... network and to restructure on all levels creating new pathways for mission.” Let us take steps to forge a network with UN Women from local to global!

Good Shepherd Raises Voice for the Voiceless at the Middle East Synod

By Clare Nolan GSIJPO

Two weeks in October (the 10th to 24th) in Rome witnessed a special gathering, presided over by Pope Benedict. A Synod of Bishops of the Middle East was held whose objectives were twofold:



to strengthen Christians in the Middle East in their identity and to foster communion among the Churches that will support authentic and joyful witness to Christian life. Among over 250 participants, we are proud to say, two Good Shepherd sisters – Sister Karima Awad, provincial superior of Good Shepherd, Egypt and Sr. Claude Naddaf, Superior of the Convent of Sisters of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, Damascus, Syria.

The Middle East region holds particular challenges for the church. The area is fraught with various conflict situations; Christians are minorities in their own societies and are often forgotten minorities within the Western churches.

Sister Karima addressed the revitalization of spirituality and vocation. She recalled the deep contemplative monastic tradition of the early eastern churches. She emphasized the importance of being open to youth, who “are already looking for a strong spirituality, eager to



improve the quality of life, and have a thirst for justice and peace...” She named the social problems that hinder youth and called on the church to create spaces and centers where youth could fully develop in spiritual and human harmony. She noted the importance of family life and she challenged religious orders to express their presence in a deeply witnessed and joyful friendship with God. She further challenged religious communities to be renewed, warm, honest, sure of their identity as they welcome youth.

Sister Claude, in the 3 minutes allotted to her, addressed the Synod with the hope that the Middle East churches could be a leading example of respecting and promoting women’s rights in the region. She pointed out that half the population of the earth is women and so many of them are victims of violence, extreme poverty, and violation of rights. She made reference to Mary and to Mother Church to urge inclusion of women. She challenged the synod, pointing out that in their plan of work, there was “no reference to gender issues” - this in a global region where women are second class!



She presented specific actions and recommendations that could lead to this vision and concluded with the hope that Middle Eastern Churches take their place in restoring today’s world to God’s vision of an abundant life.

NELLY LEON – A LEADER OF WOMEN

By Yolanda Sanchez GSIJPO

For the ninth consecutive year 100 leading women in business, social, professional and academic fields in Chile were awarded a prize. The Award directors describe that “these women in different areas have decided not to be spectators, but actors of society, putting their talents and their work to serve the common good”.

Sister Nelly León Correa of the Commission Justice, Peace and Solidarity of the Province Bolivia/Chile, received the Mercury prize for women in partnership with business: "100 Women Leaders". Nelly León has devoted much of her life to work with women who are incarcerated in Santiago. Every day she spends in accompaniment and support of those who seek spiritual guidance, as the coordinator of religious activities in the prison.

"To not abuse them more than they have already been abused" – this is the motivation of Sister Nelly with the women she encounters daily. She knows their basic needs: to regain their dignity, find self-esteem, connect with their families and their work.



For more information:

<http://noticias.iglesia.cl/noticia.php?id=13481>

A DREAM COMES TRUE

By JP Committee of Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka is moving from war and violence towards an era of Peace and Harmony. Is it only a dream? To become real, we think that it is important for the young generation -those Tamil and Sinhala most affected by a future of war or peace- to be connected with each other and learn to live in peace and harmony. Therefore the GS Justice and Peace Committee organized a program for young girls from the North and the South to internalize the real meaning of peace.

The main purpose of this program was to help them towards healing and reconciliation; this will promote peace among youth all races and creeds across Sri Lanka. The vision of the workshop was *Reconciling Nation*.



The Objectives of the program:

- To create an understanding through the sharing of their experiences;
- To promote healing and reconciliation;
- To deepen understanding of peace and become a shepherd of peace and reconciliation.

The program was held from the 17th – 19th of September 2010 with 100 young girls from the North and East and from the estate sector. There were 46 ex-combatants who are now rehabilitated under the guidance of the Good Shepherd Sisters. Also, 100 girls from the South were accompanied by sisters.

Our Unit leader, Sr. Rohini, was the main guest among councilors, sisters and priests participating at the opening ceremony. All the girls and invitees gathered at the gate and were led to the hall by a cultural dance.

At the entrance were two Tamil and Sinhala girls dressed in their cultural dresses to welcome the guests with cultural rituals. All the girls from the South welcomed the girls from the North and the East with a temple flower.



After an “ice breaking” game the participants were divided into groups and were given an opportunity to introduce themselves to each other. Even though many did not know how to communicate verbally, we could see them using the language of affection which drew them to hold hands and enjoy each other’s company. Language was not a barrier for the participants to work together.



That night they had another discussion through presentations of video clips, an enriching experience for them. This teaching led them to understand each other more deeply and drew them to embrace each other and ask pardon from one another for the damage caused by the nation and the elders. Their only wish for each other was to experience lasting peace.

Our wish is that this is a long standing and loving memory for the young girls and that one day they will be the messengers of Peace and reconciliation to a united Nation. We think the dream can be a reality through the hope we see in these young persons.

CARE OF THE EARTH: CLEAN COOK STOVES

By Clare Nolan GSIJPO

Several years ago Gaia Association in Addis Ababa worked in partnership with Good Shepherd, demonstrating clean cook ethanol stoves to women who otherwise spend many hours collecting scarce firewood and cooking on “dirty” burning fuel. Gaia even came to the UN in New York and presented a workshop on clean cook stoves, based on experiences with Good Shepherd’s project. But scarce funding and political decisions leave one wondering if a project can ever be finalized and fulfilled. Recently, in November 2010, Dr. Paul Anastas, an Assistant Administrator of the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), spent the day with the Gaia Association in Addis Ababa, learning about the ethanol stove project. Among the field visits they conducted, they were welcomed by Good Shepherd Sister Clemencia and staff to discuss the benefits of women who have clean cook stoves – benefits to the woman, her family, and to the environment. The presentations and stove demonstration went well with discussions on ethanol supply, future plans, investments required for more installation and sustainable

distribution. Little by little we patiently care for the earth and support women.

*Commission for Social Development
49th Session, 9 to 18 February 2011, New
York at the United Nations*

Priority Theme: "Poverty Eradication"

The Commission for Social Development (CSocD) is a functional commission of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the United Nations. It consists of 46 members elected by ECOSOC.

In [resolution 2010/10](#), the Economic and Social Council decided that that the priority theme for the 2011–2012 review and policy cycle should be "Poverty Eradication", taking into account its relationship with social integration and full employment and decent work for all.

More Information:

<http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/csd/index.html>

<http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/csd/pgme.html>

PRAAYER AND ACTION FOR CHILDREN

By Sister Alba Luz Martínez, Colombia



On November 19th 2010, World Day of Prayer brought the opportunity for children in Manizales, Colombia to participate in a march for children’s rights, supported by the Sisters of the Good Shepherd through the “Little Friends of Jesus” Reconciliation Program.

The march began at the parish church and ended at the Cathedral Basilica of Our Lady of the Rosary of Manizales. The children were accompanied by the youth groups of the parish and the Cathedral, lay associates and



volunteers of Good Shepherd, mothers of the children’s program, and members of the Committee for Justice and Peace for the CRC (Colombian Religious Conference), and other religious groups for children. Children-led prayer was the focus of the beginning and the end of March and throughout children walked with slogans and songs proclaiming children’s rights worldwide. Costumes expressed life, and brought the invitation to respect and love children. The day was a beautiful sign to those who saw these boys and girls in solidarity with the rest of the world’s children, especially with those who are suffering.

We invite you to visit of the Winifred’s Blog which contains valuable and important information.

The link is:
<http://winifredd.wordpress.com>

International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women: a top priority for UN leaders
By Sutisa Utalun, GSIJPO intern

“Men must teach each other men that real men do not violate or oppress women,” thus



Secretary General Ban Ki-moon set the tone for the United Nations commemoration of the 2010 International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women. He went on, “let us acknowledge the widespread and growing efforts to address this important issue. No longer are women’s organizations alone. From Latin America to the United States, from Asia to Africa, men and boys, young and old, celebrities and sports personalities, public and private organizations, and ordinary citizens are doing more to protect women and girls and promote their empowerment and rights.” The Network of Men Leaders launched last year by the Secretary General Mr. Ban Ki Moon has generated engagement that spreads the message far and wide: violence against women and girls has no place in any society, and impunity for perpetrators must no longer be tolerated. The UN urges all governments, civil society, businesses, and individuals to take responsibility for eradicating violence against women and girls.

The UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women is one source of innovation that is particularly worthy of support and Good Shepherd can look into accessing this locally. “The Trust Fund can transform promises into actions” The Trust fund campaign has the support of stars such as Debi Nova, a popular Costa Rican musician who partners to raise money and ensure the fund will be sustainable.

More information about UN Trust Fund in the link:
[http://www.unifem.org/gender_issues/violence against women/trust fund.php](http://www.unifem.org/gender_issues/violence_against_women/trust_fund.php)

Michelle Bachelet, former president of Chile and the recently appointed Executive Director of UN Women, also highlighted the success of a growing body of action around the world to stop violence against women. But she underscored the reality that political, social and financial support must sustain momentum and currently the Trust Fund meets less than 2 percent of requests for support. “UN Women will mobilize forces at

the global level, and help develop national capacities to accelerate action to end violence against women now,” she promised. A new UN organization to promote gender equality, UN Women, will start operations in January 2011. Our Good Shepherd NGO representative, who has already sent a letter of congratulations and support to Ms Bachelet on behalf of the congregation, will be working with UN Women in various capacities, partnering to make the promises a reality.

UN Commission on the Status of Women 55

The fifty-fifth session of the Commission on the Status of Women will take place at United Nations Headquarters in New York from Tuesday, 22 February to Friday, 4 March 2011.

The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) is a functional commission of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), dedicated exclusively to gender equality and advancement of women. It is the principal global policy-making body.

Participants:

Representatives of Member States, UN entities, and ECOSOC-accredited non-governmental organizations (NGOs) from all regions of the world will attend the session.

More information:

<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/55sess>

Human Rights Action in Geneva,

By Hedwig Johl, NGO Representative to UN Geneva

I followed the review of women’s human rights in three GS countries, Malta, Czech Republic and India, at the 47th Session of CEDAW. Prior to the session I attended a three day Workshop sponsored by IWRAW, (International Women's Rights Action Watch Asia Pacific) who provide a very good opportunity for NGOs to learn about and collaborate with the CEDAW experts.

Below is a short summary of each country I followed; they will give you an idea of the CEDAW opportunities for GS to speak on behalf of women. I am hopeful many sisters will learn about CEDAW and present national reports, which I can support.

Czech Republic: The CEDAW Committee is very interested to receive communications from the grassroots so the testimony of a Roma woman who spoke of her forced sterilization was very powerful. She happened to know Prisca, our Sri Lankan sister working in Ostrava, highlighting the strength of networks. In the concluding observations CEDAW urged the government to adopt legislative changes defending the requirements of free, prior and informed consent with regard to sterilization, including a period of at least seven days between informing the patient about the nature of the sterilization, its permanent consequences, potential risks and available alternatives and the patient’s expression of her free, prior and informed consent.

See full reports:

<http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cedaw/docs/co/CEDAW-C-CZE-CO-5.pdf>

For **India** the Committee recommended the government (referred to as State’s party) to take immediate, effective and gender-specific measures to rehabilitate and compensate women victims of violence, including sexual violence, and their families in Gujarat. Action should include prompt reparation, compensation, medical care, trauma counseling, and sustained rehabilitation,

commensurate with the harm suffered and sufficient to enable them to rebuild their lives. The Committee requests the State to provide written information on the steps undertaken to implement the recommendations by October 2011. Now GS in India can observe if something will change in the next months, if gender-specific measures are taken to rehabilitate and compensate women victims of violence. If not, they can include this in the next report from the national level. See full reports:

<http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cedaw/docs/co/CEDAW-C-IND-CO--SP1.pdf>

Malta: the Committee welcomed Malta's ratification of both the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime in 2003 and the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking. CEDAW reaffirmed that the government has the primary responsibility and is particularly accountable for the full implementation of the obligations under the Convention, the Committee stresses that the Convention is binding on all branches of the government.

See full reports:

<http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cedaw/docs/co/CEDAW-C-MLT-CO-4.pdf>

The UPR (Universal Periodic Review) is another Human Rights mechanism to monitor governments compliance with Human Rights. We had the 9th session in November 2010 with Panama, Honduras and Lebanon. We welcome more GS participation in submitting NGO reports.

Middle East – Good Shepherd joins 16 Days Campaign against Gender Violence

By Georgette Tannoury, Regional NGO Designate To UN ESCWA (Lebanon)

The Middle East remains, sadly, a region where violence against women is experienced on a daily basis. It affects both on the physical and moral aspects of a woman's life.

Various Lebanese NGOs used the international *16 Days against Violence Campaign* to organize several activities for awareness of civil society about the issues.

GS took part in two main activities. First in the ESCWA (Economic and Social Commission West Africa), there was a discussion that brought together representatives of NGOs from Jordan, Kuwait, Iraq, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia and Lebanon. Ms. Affaf Omar, President of the women in the ESCWA section introduced and facilitated the meeting. Voice was given to the current violence suffered by Iraqi woman. The large number of women who suffer rape and the large number of women who engage in prostitution for subsistence level of living is overwhelming. Other countries followed with similar issues. From Kuwait we heard about the law on rape whereby girls are forced to marry the person who raped them. Women and NGOs are trying to change the law. The second activity was at a gathering that brought together UNESCO and several NGOs, Ministers, journalists and academics. It was a public demonstration to strengthen awareness of the problem of violence against women in our region.

What I learned in the 16 Day Campaign is that NGOs (civil society) is well aware of the issues and actively working in many ways to eliminate violence against women. It's a lengthy struggle and demands a change in attitudes.

Supporting the Word of God in the life of Indigenous Women

By Maria Juana Urbina, JP Contact, Tseltales Community in Chiapas (Mexico)

Indigenous women of the Tseltales group gathered in Chiapas, Mexico to read and to live the Word of the God with a woman's heart, eye, and mind. The meeting, with the theme "*The Call of the Spirit to Defend our Mother Earth*," was supported and sponsored by an inter-congregational group of religious

women, including Good Shepherd, Daughters of Charity of St Vincent, Dominicans of the Presentation, Missionaries of the Sacred Heart, and Sisters of Mary Reparative. 191 women from 5 parishes attended. All participate in groups of biblical reflection in their local communities and some are coordinators. This space for reflection and sharing is important because as well as experiencing their value as women, they find in Scripture the strength and inspiration to try new ways of leadership in their families, their communities and the Church; most importantly they feel that they are persons of dignity who have rights.

Many of the women attend from distant villages where there are high rates of illiteracy; but each woman can listen, is encouraged to analyze their reality, to pray, and to share some of their thoughts. They follow the example of Mary,



to be a messenger of good news. As one woman reports: "It's a gift that God gives us to share and announce the Word." Others reflect: "We have heard in our Tselale language what the word of God says to us; we come to this meeting with all our hearts because we feel God is calling, it cost us to come, but we are here." "My heart is illuminated, because before the meeting I had wounds, disappointments, and arriving here I have a larger world and more desire for life." "Here we are, women from five parishes, we have come to lose our shame, to open the heart of each other, because when we participate it is because we have the Spirit with us." "We will be witnesses in our communities, ready to plant the seed, and

walk with sisters and brothers." "Our hope is the Word of God, that God finds us watching and working with all our brothers and sisters – it is the work of every woman, to be with one heart and to face the problems of daily life." "It is the gift that God gives us to announce and communicate the Word, even if are limited we continue the effort."



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JUSTICE PEACE WEB SITE PAGE:

Good Shepherd International Justice Peace office (GSIJP) Office:
http://www.buonpastoreint.org/index.php?rub=pages/page&page_id=p45590329ca5b8

Bureau International Justice et Paix du Bon Pasteur (BIJPBP) :
http://www.buonpastoreint.org/index.php?rub=pages/page&page_id=p455a242ee6a67

Oficina Internacional Justicia y Paz del Buen Pastor (OIJPBP):
http://www.buonpastoreint.org/index.php?rub=pages/page&page_id=p455b5d1b2b4f9

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Please distribute to all communities, programs and
 Good Shepherd Friends in your province.
 Thank you.

The Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd is an NGO in special consultative status, ECOSOC, UN